

FOR RELEASE:

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WILMINGTON, DE — Delaware's Congressional delegation -- Senator Tom Carper, Senator Chris Coons, and Representative John Carney -- joined Lt. Governor Matt Denn at the Nemours Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington on Thursday to highlight the need for expanded use of electronic health records in treating patients and promoting better overall health.

"I have had the opportunity to see firsthand the enhanced quality of care that health information technology has brought to this hospital," said Lt. Governor Denn. "The children of this state are directly benefitting from Nemours' use of health information technology, and we are very grateful to Nemours for being so committed to its patients."

"As we implement the health IT incentive payments and the Affordable Care Act in the First State and the rest of the nation, we need to focus on getting better outcomes for less money," Senator Carper said. "Today's electronic health record demonstration and discussion at the A.I. duPont Hospital for Children, one of the leading children's hospitals in our nation, gave me, Sen. Coons, Rep. Carney, and Lt. Gov. Denn the chance to review this innovative technology and learn how electronic health records will help us to improve the quality and efficiency of health care while also reducing costs."

"Ultimately, we must ensure that the health IT incentive payments are spent effectively and efficiently - so that more hospitals and practices in Delaware can utilize electronic medical

records and increase the quality of care that they provide for Delawareans, while maintaining and preserving patient privacy,” Carper continued. “I have been a long-time supporter of health information technology and I will continue to work on this issue with Sen. Coons, Rep. Carney and my other colleagues in this new session of Congress.”

“Electronic medical records can help prevent the harmful and sometimes tragic impacts of a lack of communication between medical facilities,” Senator Coons said. “Built correctly, healthy information systems can prevent prescription drug conflicts, reduce redundant testing and improve the delivery of care. Investments now will save money and lives later. I encourage all of Delaware’s medical professionals to adopt innovative health information technology and take advantage of the incentives being offered by these programs.”

“Containing the rising cost of healthcare is critical so that individuals, families, and businesses can find quality, affordable coverage,” said Congressman Carney. “Health information technology is one of the most effective ways to reduce healthcare costs, while improving patient care. Delaware is a national leader in the implementation of electronic medical records, and I look forward to working with Nemours, and other leading healthcare organizations across the state, to continue the progress we have made.”

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act included specific provisions encourage use of electronic health records. Thursday’s event was one of 100 being held at medical facilities around the country to highlight a pair of programs funded by the Recovery Act to incentivize payments for eligible medical professionals and hospitals that adopt, implement, upgrade or demonstrate meaningful use of certified electronic health record technology.

The Medicare Electronic Health Records Incentive Program provides eligible medical professionals and hospitals with incentives of up to \$44,000 over as many as five years if they can demonstrate meaningful use of certified electronic health record technology.

The Medicaid Electronic Health Records Incentive Program offers incentives of up to \$63,750 over as many as six years if they can demonstrate meaningful use of certified electronic health record technology. The Delaware Division of Medicaid and Medical Assistance has said it will participate in the program and will begin issuing incentive payments by June 2011.

For more information about these programs, visit:

<https://www.cms.gov/EHRIncentivePrograms/>

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